

A phrase which the President used in an informal speech at a dinner given by Speaker Cannon to the Gridiron Club in Washington, on March 17, attracted wide attention at the time and led to its elaboration into a formal address later. He spoke in terms of strong denunciation of "the man with the muckrake" who in newspapers and magazines made slanderous and mendacious attacks upon men in public life and upon men engaged in public work and at the same time defended labor leaders who were guilty, directly or indirectly, of murderous assaults upon officials who opposed their schemes. To an eminent jurist who wrote to him expressing warm approval of what he had said, the President replied on March 20, 1906:

"I am glad you liked what I said. I had not prepared the speech at all, but I had been reading with great indignation a certain magazine and the news of the way certain labor unions were subscribing for the defense of those Western Federation of Miners people whose organization certainly, if not they themselves personally, were accessories to murder before the fact in the case of Governor Steunenberg. As you know, my dear Judge, I will go to the limit in enforcing the law against the wealthiest man or the wealthiest corporation if I think he or it has done wrong; but my whole soul revolts at a campaign of foul slander waged against men, down at bottom and primarily, because they have succeeded in business; and above all, at the sinister tendency to condone crimes of brutality, in-

cluding murder, if those committing them can
obtain the
support of some powerful labor organization.
I shall try
and see if I can not write out that speech,
recasting and
elaborating it so as to make it more definite,
as soon as I
get the chance,⁷¹

He decided to make the subject a part of
his address
on the laying of the corner-stone of the office
building of
the House of Representatives, on April 14.
Writing to
Ray Stannard Baker, on April 9, 1906, he
said:

"One reason I want to make that address
is because